



National Certificate of Educational Achievement  
TAUMATA MĀTAURANGA Ā-MOTU KUA TAEA

## **Exemplar for Internal Achievement Standard Religious Studies Level 2**

This exemplar supports assessment against:

**Achievement Standard 91724**

**Explain a significant theme in a sacred text within a religious tradition**

An annotated exemplar is an extract of student evidence, with a commentary, to explain key aspects of the standard. It assists teachers to make assessment judgements at the grade boundaries.

New Zealand Qualifications Authority

To support internal assessment

	Grade Boundary: Low Excellence
1.	<p>For Excellence, the student needs to comprehensively explain a significant theme in a sacred text within a religious tradition.</p> <p>This involves explaining the wider implications of the theme.</p> <p>The student has comprehensively explained the wider personal (1) and historical (2) implications found with regard to the significant theme of grace for a person who is a Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) and society in general.</p> <p>For a more secure Excellence, the student would need to comprehensively explain the historical implication by providing evidence from the teachings of SDA, through Church documents, and teachings from authoritative sources within the Church, especially in relation to the Bible, - to show how important the Bible is as a source of the meaning of grace.</p>

*'I do not understand the mystery of grace, only that it meets us where we are but does not leave us where it found us', Unknown.*

In Seventh Day Adventist (SDA), teaching Grace has many different meanings, different wordings and has many different ways of expressing grace. God grants each and every one of us with undeserved grace and gives us a life to live. Grace is a great beauty that cannot be described. We see favour be placed upon Adam and Eve, Cain and many more. Although we cannot see the simple actions of grace being evident, we still see the love and acceptance of sinful souls being forgiven.

The first action of grace that is evident in the bible comes from the story of Adam and Eve. The covering of their naked bodies after failing to listen to that one command God had instructed them not to do, Genesis...

In these particular verses, we see the wrong that both Adam and Eve had made, and the way that they had explained themselves to the Lord. We see the way Adam addressed God and the way that he spoke to him. 'The fall of Man' had then begun from that point on; sin had made its way onto the life that God had crested through the evil deeds of a snake: *'The snake tricked me she said and I ate the fruit'*. During this point, we see and understand God is under fury knowing that his people or the two main people he trusted with his garden had betrayed him because of a snake and woman's wrong doings that had led to punishing all three that were involved in the sin. God hadn't gone to an extent where he will punish the two and leave them stranded nowhere where death will find them, only he had grace and favour on the two he spared their lives and had only given them consequences to their actions, Genesis.....

God also demonstrated grace/acceptance once again in the story of Cain and Abel. The jealousy of one brother that turned in to anger and fury that led to the death of the other brother. God sees in the anger and jealousy that Cain is to find acceptance. God is calm and his words are righteous. Cain does not listen to the word of God but lets the devil control his anger when he kills his brother. God does punish Cain by making him wander the earth with no permanent home to his name. The killing of his brother had severed his relationship with his brother and God. The curse of God may have been harsh, but one that he deserved. However, it is important to see that God does not kill Cain but saves him from death by showing mercy and grace to him. He shows undeserving grace to Cain despite the crime being disrespecting of God. This giving of grace by God to Cain showed that he works in miraculous ways and ways we do not understand. What we do need to know and understand is that everything happens for a reason no matter what it is; we just need to know and understand God works in ways we do not know.

In SDA doctrines, teaching the Adventist view on grace is that they believe that Jesus' is our second chance at living. The death of our Saviour was for us to be renewed in life itself and

understand that we are sinners. We are spiritually growing, mentally knowing, physically showing and socially sharing the life of Christ within each and every one of us. "By his death on the cross Jesus triumphed over the forces of evil. He who subjugated the demonic spirit during his earthly ministry had broken the power to ensure their ultimate doom" (SDA Doctrine). The life that our Saviour has left behind is a sign that his work here on earth is not yet done Psalm 51:5. We were born sinners but we have been given a second chance to live life and this chance is to live his life. Since the death of our loving saviour we have been freed from the darkness, no longer in the stage of being afraid of what it is that is going to happen to us. Being ignored and having no reason to live. What we need to understand is that we have to come out of the darkness to live in the light and share his word Romans 5: 12-17.

I know grace has opened my eyes to understand that his undeserving grace is not an excuse to sin, but rather a reason to love and serve him more fully. I have understood that we have suffered from preaching grace at cheap expense. Grace is free but it is not cheap. People will take anything that is free, but are not interested if it is at a cost. ①

From a historical perspective, the implications of the teaching about grace means that we need to have an understanding of who God is in our lives. That the way people in the Old Testament were offered grace is still available to us today. This is because God sent his Son as our Saviour and so enables us to receive grace even though we do not deserve it at all 2Cor 12:9. God's grace gives all mankind an opportunity to be saved, if that accept Jesus as their Saviour. ②

I believe New Zealand would be a better place if people listened to what God wants of them and then the grace of God would come to them and everyone would live a better and faith filled life. SDA teaching helps us to understand how the grace of God, which he gives without us deserving it, saves us when we believe and don't take credit for it ourselves. This means we need to be people who recognise God's grace as a gift which we need to accept. ①

	Grade Boundary: High Merit
2.	<p>For Merit, the student needs to explain in detail a significant theme in a sacred text within a religious tradition.</p> <p>This involves explaining the significance of the theme within a religious tradition.</p> <p>The student has explained the significance of grace in the SDA Church (1).</p> <p>The student has provided some evidence of a personal wider implication of grace in the SDA tradition (2).</p> <p>To reach Excellence, the student would need to provide an explanation of the wider social, historical, geographical or political implications of the theme of grace as expressed within the SDA Church by providing evidence from the teachings of SDA, through Church documents, and teachings from authoritative sources within the Church, especially in relation to the Bible.</p>

**“The meaning of life. The wasted years of life. The poor choices of life. God answers the mess of life with one word: grace”. Max Lucado.**

1

The theme grace in the Bible within the Adventist tradition is shown through many texts and acts of kindness or favour in the Bible. Firstly, I will go over some of the many stories in the Old and New Testament where grace is shown and I will furthermore explain how the theme is shown in the Bible. Secondly, I will explain the significance of the theme of grace with Christianity. Thirdly, I will summarise this theme and explain why it is important within the SDA as a Church. Lastly, I will explain what I think the wider implications of grace and what it means to me.

The SDA Church states that God introduces grace: the first act of grace is shown to us by God in Genesis when Adam and Eve ate the apple and disobeyed the Lord's orders. They were hiding themselves because after their first sin was committed they realised they were naked. They tried covering themselves with leaves and trees. Instead of killing them God sent them out of the Garden of Eden with animal skins as clothes and promised pain when the woman would give birth and hard labour for the man to provide food for his family. Genesis 4:6-7 the story about Cain killing his brother Abel also shows God's Grace because God did not kill Cain for what he has done, but protects him with hid mark. Cain is unrepentant and this kind of sin destroys but God forgives and give his grace so Cain can be restored. Psalm 103:10 describes God as not treating us as our sins deserve or repaying us according to our sinfulness.

1

Another example of God's grace is with Noah in Genesis 6:5 – 8. When God does not destroy all of creation he shows favour or grace to Noah and his family and two of each kind of created creatures. This was so that things could be rebuilt for the better and the wickedness that filled the earth before would be gone.

In the New Testament, there are many references to grace. Matthew 8 Jesus preforms a number of miracles showing favour or grace to those who looked for help from him. With the Centurion, it is his faith and the grace of God that saves the servant from death. When God sacrifices his Son Jesus in all four gospels, this is the biggest act of grace from God (John 19 / Matthew 27 / Luke 25/ Mark 13). Jesus own words from the cross "Eli, eli, lama sabbachtani", shows the pain and suffering Jesus went through so that we could be redeemed. Grace generally is associated with the salvation of people.

1

1

The word 'grace' in biblical phasing for SDA is like forgiveness, repentance, renewal and salvation, means something as broad as describing the whole of God's activity towards man or as narrow as describing one segment of that activity. An accurate and common definition describes grace as the unmerited favour of God towards Man.

1

God is seen as just and holy, merciful and gracious; slow to anger and abandoning in steadfast love and faithfulness. These qualities are seen in the person of Jesus and are supported by Gen1:1, Rev 4:11 / 1 Cor 15:28 / John 3:16 /etc. The theme of grace is important to SDA Church because without God showing grace towards us we would not know that we are meant to show it to each other. We are made in God's image when he looks at us he wants to see himself and all the qualities that he possess being reflected back.

1

I think that if more people showed grace to each other there would not be as many problems in the world. If people put others before themselves and thought more about the consequences of their actions the world would be a better place to live in. I think grace helps us do this, if we are open to the grace that God gives us, even we are unmerited or non-deserving of it.

2

	Grade Boundary: Low Merit
3.	<p>For Merit, the student needs to explain in detail a significant theme in a sacred text within a religious tradition.</p> <p>This involves explaining the significance of the theme within a religious tradition.</p> <p>The student has explained in detail the SDA Church understands of the significance of grace in their teaching (1).</p> <p>For a more secure Merit, the student would need to provide further explanation of the significance of grace from a SDA Church perspective by explaining in detail the nature of humanity (Fundamental Belief 7), and how this has an impact upon the SDA Church teaching on the Experience of Salvation (Fundamental Belief 10) by providing evidence from authoritative sources.</p>



Student 3: Low Merit

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“Our worst days are never so bad that you are beyond the reach of God’s grace. And your best days are never so good that you are beyond the needs of God’s grace.” (Jerry Bridges, *The discipline of Grace; God’s Role and Our Role in the Pursuit of holiness*).

1

What this essay will concentrate on is ‘grace’ and its implications on the Adventist Church today. It will touch on religious tradition been explained in protestant Christianity to sustain grace. It will be supported with quotes, verses and stories from the Bible both Old and New Testament, which will help, gives clarification of the theme of Grace.

In the beginning, God introduces grace in the story of Noah. Noah is also known as a prophet of God was commanded by God to build an Ark. As we learn in the Bible, in the book of Genesis chapters six to nine of the wickedness of men and all flesh is corrupted. The Lord promised flood but also keeps his covenant with Noah because of his righteousness.

SDA Church thinks the grace of the Lord is evidence in his love for his people meaning that those who have faith in the Lord and live according to the will of the Lord. God will show his grace on them, at the same time the flood demonstrates the grace of God in all things by sending the flood he washed away and cleanse the earth of all humanities corruptions.

1

Throughout the story of Noah, the grace of the Lord is merciful in saving Noah and his family on the other hand, his grace can be obtained by those who believe and have faith as in the Protestant Christianity emphasis is on the conversion of a person that truly brings the grace of God on that person.

Again, the Old Testament in the book of Genesis chapter 4 dictates the story of Cain and Abel where God demonstrates his grace in the dealing of anger and jealousy. Yet how can a tragic story of two brothers with such different attributes and values show the grace of God but in the way, they are received by God. For example their offerings to the same od was a show of gratitude and respect to God, where Cain being a tiller of the ground offered his fruits and as for Abel chose and selected his firstlings and the fattest of his flock for his offering was accepted by God. Therefore, the grace beheld by Abel as he gave his best sheep and all for the Lord, whereas Cain gave whatever he got his hands on. And because of this grace that was on Abel jealousy stirred in the heart of Cain and blinded his eyes from God and slew his brother Abel.

The Lord asks Cain in Genesis chapter four verse nine “where is thy brother?” and he said “I know not: am I my brother’s keeper?” where we know that God already knows the answer to the question but was a reminder to Cain of the innocent blood he had shed. Nevertheless the Lord’s grace was upon Cain as well as we see that Cain was not punished in death but rather given a second chance to repent of his actions, yet his punishment was to bear the mark on his forehead. This is a show of the grace of God as we learn in the Protestant Christianity that conversion can take place at any time but where the actual person needs to have a change of heart is when grace is received. Religious tradition in different faiths can see the same story but have a different meaning of how grace is gained or obtained. Such is mentioned in the Catholic Church holds that it is because of the action of Christ and the Holy Spirit in transforming into divine life what is subjected to his power that the sacraments confer the grace they signify, which they say that the power of Christ and the Spirit acts in and through each sacrament and yet depends on the individual person if they are worthy to receive this grace (Wikipedia, Catholic Theology).

We learn from the stories and accounts above about grace but the SDA Church would say that nothing is so more as evidence then Jesus himself who becomes the grace in the New Testament.

1

Matthew chapter 8 tells the healings of the sick and ill, the chasing away of the evil spirits and the calming of the storm where Jesus himself is the grace and performs these actions of grace so that all may know him in the true son of the living God. Each of these actions has a purpose in it where each form of grace of God is performed in different situations and in different concepts, but is all in the grace of God. It is clear that with grace a great sense of faith is needs to be established in the individual in order for God's grace to be able to be magnified.

We learn in the parable of the olive trees the need for us to let go of the things that will hinder our faith in God and abstain from his grace, if it wasn't for the trimming of the bad branches of the olive tree, the infested part would have damaged the whole tree. Another of these parables is the lost sheep where God emphasises the importance of one soul as greater in the eyes of the Lord, in this parable the shepherd leaves his flock to go and find the lost sheep, which he does and returns it to the flock. With both of these parables, the grace God teaches us the importance of relationships, of compassion, of integrity and of faith, which is evidence of his grace when we are obedient.

Jesus Christ himself is that grace, his sacrifice for us is the pinnacle of all things pertaining grace, he himself spoke upon the cross as he was nailed to the cross and blood dripped from his flesh asked the father to forgive them, for they do not knoweth what they do. What a great exemplar of grace at the peak of his death he showed his grace on us by dying for the remission of our sins. Through that atonement of Christ, we are given a second chance to repent and covenant with our God, as did the Israelites, the Hebrews and the Jews before us.

1

In Revelation chapters 1 to 3, the grace of God is at the end of the world. Revelation describes the things that will happen to those who don't take the Lord seriously and the things that we must do to prepare ourselves for his second coming. He states in Revelation that he will come like a thief in the night and that he that overcomes shall gain eternal salvation of his grace. His grace at the end of the world reminds us to overcome our tribulations, our weaknesses and to retain our names in the book of life. God's grace is upon us every hour and minute of our being, it is how we want his grace in the end that will determine what you need to do to accomplish his commandments. As he says in

Revelations chapter 3 verses 21-22, 'behold I stand at the door, and knock: if any men hear my voice, and open the door, I will come into him and sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne.' Wm. Paul young emphasises on grace as he quotes "Grace doesn't depend on suffering to exist, but where there is suffering you will find grace in many facets and colours" (*Wm. Paul Young, The Shag: Where Tragedy Confronts Eternity*).

1

Therefore, in conclusion for the SDA Church the grace of God is apparent in his mercy and his love for us. We are his children and his grace resides in us when we are obeying his commandments and not only in obeying but is there for us to strive for as in the many different appearances of grace in the Bible is described in the above. God shows his grace at all things whether it was to reward or punish his grace was with the people when they are here in trials and tribulations and in his own suffering; we have his grace upon us to repent and faith in him.

1

	Grade Boundary: High Achieved
4.	<p>For Achieved, the student needs to explain a significant theme in a sacred text within a religious tradition.</p> <p>This involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• outlining a significant theme in a sacred text</li><li>• explaining how the theme is conveyed throughout the sacred text.</li></ul> <p>The student has outlined the theme of grace within the SDA Church (1).</p> <p>The student has explained how the theme is conveyed throughout the sacred text (2).</p> <p>To reach Merit, the student could provide evidence of the significance of grace within the SDA Church tradition by providing evidence of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• how disharmony erupted when a once-perfect being abused his God-given freedom. Satan “the accuser” chose self-centeredness and slander over truth and love.</li><li>• how when we accept God's grace and salvation, the Holy Spirit reveals our need for Jesus and recreates us. The Spirit builds our faith and helps us leave our broken lives behind.</li></ul>

Student 4: High Achieved

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What is grace through Christian's point of view? **Where in the Bible does God demonstrate grace?** ①  
The world today seems to take the Lord's love and favour for granted, let's see what the Christian belief would have to say about His grace.

**What is grace? In the Christian theology, grace is said to be "The love and mercy given to us by God because God desires us to have it, not because of anything we have done to earn it". Grace to Christians is known to be a natural gift from God.** ①  
Where He is nothing but good to us, and all we do is take Him for granted. He shows us grace through His continuous love, blessings, the gift of life, continuously forgiving us when we have been in the wrong and many more, but all we seem to do is not take any notice of His divine grace and mercy that He has bestowed upon us, and most of the time it leads us into temptations of the world and at the end of the day we end up on the wrong side of the track in life.

**When Christians say that, "the love and mercy given to us by God because God desires us to have it". This means that everything God offers us, He wants us to keep it. He wants us to know that through His grace towards us shown through His love and mercy, He wants His people to know He's there for us and to call out to Him, which is the same as having favour upon ourselves to calling unto Him for His mercy and love.** ①

"Sin is no longer your master, for you no longer live under the requirements of the law. Instead, you live under the freedom of God's grace". – **Romans 6:14**. This verse reflects back to the story of **Adam and Eve** when God gives them freedom to live in the Garden of Eden. God gave Adam and Eve freedom within the Garden of Eden; they could eat off any tree in the garden, except one particular tree. This was the Tree of Life, the tree that determined both good and evil. God's grace is shown when He still cared and loved Adam and Eve although they disobeyed Him and His commands. In the Bible, the story of Adam and Eve is where God first demonstrates His grace. God showed favour unto both Adam and Eve when he clothed them with leaves from His garden. Although they did not show any grace towards God and got thrown out of the Garden of Eden, God still looked after them. He not only clothed them, He also fed them and they were being well looked after. ②

**Genesis 6:8** "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord". This is the first time the word 'grace' or 'favour' is being shown in the Bible or when God introduces the word grace. In **Genesis 4 God demonstrates grace.** ②

**He shows a way of dealing with anger and jealousy. God demonstrates grace towards Cain, when he killed his innocent brother Abel.** ①  
He dealt with Cain's punishment through His own way. Usually, now a day's people would kill another if they committed murder like Cain had done. However, God dealt with this in His own manner. He had to deal with Cain's anger and jealousy, which was towards his brother Abel that caused him to kill him and bring him as an offering unto God.

In **the New Testament** it talks about the grace that Jesus showed through when he would always perform miracles and have mercy on those who are in need. God showed grace by performing many miracles and also by healing those who are sick and crippled because that was the will of the Lord. ②  
One story in the Bible where Jesus showed Grace, is where **Jesus healed the 10 sick people with leprosy** and when only one out of ten came back to thank Jesus for healing him/her. The Lord knew, ②

that all he had to do was show his grace and heal those who needed to be healed and did not mind about the others who did not turn back to thank him. When Jesus died on the cross, we received grace from God because we are saved by this act despite not deserving it.

1

The theme of grace or the way God demonstrates grace in the Bible, is a lesson for us to learn from. We should read and understand the verses in the why God demonstrates grace towards those who do not deserve his love and grace, yet he does not turn away from them. He still loves and cares for them; better yet, he still shows favour and grace in his actions towards His people.

1

The meaning of grace to me is that the way God demonstrates grace towards us sinners is a blessing.

	Grade Boundary: Low Achieved
5.	<p>For Achieved, the student needs to explain a significant theme in a sacred text within a religious tradition.</p> <p>This involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• outlining a significant theme in a sacred text</li> <li>• explaining how the theme is conveyed throughout the sacred text.</li> </ul> <p>The student has briefly outlined the significant theme of grace in the Bible within the SDA Church (1).</p> <p>The student has explained some of the ways that grace is conveyed throughout the Bible (2).</p> <p>The student has provided evidence of a personal wider implication (3).</p> <p>For a more secure Achieved, the student could further outline how grace is a significant theme in the Bible for the SDA Church.</p> <p>In addition, the student could explain how grace is conveyed throughout the Bible as a significant theme by providing evidence from the teachings of SDA, through explaining the nature of humanity (Fundamental Belief 7), and how this has an impact upon SDA Church teaching on the understanding of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.</p>

Student 5: Low Achieved
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What is grace through Christian's point of view? **Where in the Bible does God demonstrate grace?**  
The world today seems to take the Lord's love and favour for granted, let's see what the Christian belief would have to say about His grace.

①

**What is grace? In the Christian theology, grace is said to be "The love and mercy given to us by God because God desires us to have it, not because of anything we have done to earn it". Grace to Christians is known to be a natural gift from God. When Christians say that, "the love and mercy given to us by God because God desires us to have it". This means that everything God offers us, He wants us to keep it. He wants us to know that through His grace towards us shown through His love and mercy, He wants His people to know He's there for us and to call out to Him, which is the same as having favour upon ourselves to calling unto Him for His mercy and love.**

①

"Sin is no longer your master, for you no longer live under the requirements of the law. Instead, you live under the freedom of God's grace". God gave Adam and Eve freedom within the Garden of Eden; they could eat off any tree in the garden, except one particular tree. This was the Tree of Life, the tree that determined both good and evil. **God's grace is shown when He still cared and loved Adam and Eve although they disobeyed Him and His commands. In the Bible, the story of Adam and Eve is where God first demonstrates His grace.** Although they did not show any grace towards God and got thrown out of the Garden of Eden, God still looked after them. He not only clothed them, He also fed them and they were being well looked after.

①

②

**Genesis 6:8 "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord".** This is the first time the word 'grace' or 'favour' is being shown in the Bible or when God introduces the word grace. In Genesis 4 God demonstrates grace. He shows a way of dealing with anger and jealousy. **God demonstrates grace towards Cain, when he killed his innocent brother Abel.** He dealt with Cain's punishment through His own way. Usually, now a day's people would kill another if they committed murder like Cain had done.

②

②

**In the New Testament it talks about the grace that Jesus showed through when he would always perform miracles and have mercy on those who are in need.** God showed grace by performing many miracles and also by healing those who are sick and crippled because that was the will of the Lord. The theme of grace or the way God demonstrates grace in the Bible, is a lesson for us to learn from. He still loves and cares for them; better yet, he still shows favour and grace in his actions towards His people.

②

**The meaning of grace, I strongly believe that the way God demonstrates grace towards us sinners is a blessing. The way that we treat God is unreasonable compared to the way he treats us. God shows grace and love towards us, although we do not deserve it. He does it out of love and His own heart.**

③

	Grade Boundary: High Not Achieved
6.	<p>For Achieved, the student needs to explain a significant theme in a sacred text within a religious tradition.</p> <p>This involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• outlining a significant theme in a sacred text</li> <li>• explaining how the theme is conveyed throughout the sacred text.</li> </ul> <p>The student has very briefly outlined the significant theme of grace in the Bible within the SDA Church (1).</p> <p>The student has cited three examples of some of the ways that grace is conveyed throughout the Bible (2).</p> <p>To reach Achieved, the student should further outline how grace is a significant theme in the Bible for the SDA Church.</p> <p>In addition, the student could explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how grace is conveyed throughout the Bible as a significant theme by providing more examples from both the Old and New Testaments, evidence from the teachings of SDA</li> <li>• how salvation transforms how we see the world, meaning we no longer fear our pasts, or future, but embrace a present full of hope and love.</li> </ul>



Student 6: High Not Achieved

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*"Give us grace and strength to forbear and to persevere. Give us courage and gaiety and the quiet mind, spare to us our friends, soften to us our enemies"* Robert Louis Stevenson.

1

Robert Louis Stevenson was a Scottish novelist, poet, essayist, and travel writer. His most famous works are *Treasure Island*, *Kidnapped* and the strange *Curse of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*.

In Christianity theology, grace has been defined as the "love and mercy given to us by God because God desired us to have it, not because of anything we have done to earn it".

1

Noah deserves grace because he is the one who built the ark and saved the animals of earth and his family.

2

God tells Abraham to leave his country and go to the land that God has told him to go to, Abraham does not know where he is going but he did not care because the Lord had promised Abraham the new promised land. When they passed through Canaan the Canaanites were still living in the land, but God said to Abraham "to your offspring I will give this land". Therefore, Abraham built an altar there to the Lord who had appeared to him.

2

In conclusion, grace means the love of our heavenly father who has blessed us and gave up his only son so we could be here. Like it said in **John 3:16** "for God so loved the world he gave up his only son".

2